

**SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURAL AFFAIRS  
OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Avon School District  
Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process Report 2003**

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**Date of On Site Visit:** January 14, 2003

**Date of Report:** January 22, 2003

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This report contains the results of the steering committee's self-assessment and the validation of the self-assessment by the Office of Special Education. The report addresses six principles – General Supervision, Free Appropriate Public Education, Appropriate Evaluation, Procedural Safeguards, Individualized Education Program and Least Restrictive Environment. Each principle is rated based on the following scale:

<b>Promising Practice</b>	The district/agency exceeds this requirement through the implementation of innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices.
<b>Meets Requirements</b>	The district/agency consistently meets this requirement.
<b>Needs Improvement</b>	The district/agency has met this requirement but has identified areas of weakness that left not addressed may result in non-compliance.
<b>Out of Compliance</b>	The district/agency consistently does not meet this requirement.
<b>Not applicable</b>	In a small number of cases, the standard may not be applicable for your district/agency. If an item is not applicable, the steering committee should briefly explain why the item is NA. Example – no private schools within the district boundaries.

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<b>Principle 1 – General Supervision</b>
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General supervision means the school district's administrative responsibilities to ensure federal and state regulations are implemented and a free appropriate public education is provided for each eligible child with a disability. The specific areas addressed in principle one are child find, referral procedures, children voluntarily enrolled by parents in private schools, students placed by the school district, improving results through performance goals and indicators (assessment, drop out, graduation), professional development, suspension and expulsion rates.

**Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

Comprehensive Plan

Pre-referral/TAT documentation and Referral Sheets

Teacher Surveys

IEPs

File Reviews  
Budget Data  
Child Count  
Parental Rights Brochure  
Table C-Suspension and Expulsion Data  
Table D-SAT 9 Participation Rates for Avon School District  
Table H-Existing Data for Avon School District  
Avon District Negotiated Agreement-Phase Money  
Workshops/Inservices/University Classes

### **Promising Practice**

The steering committee determined the district's provision of Phrase Money to be a promising practice. The fund is included in the district's Negotiated Agreement and allows the educators the opportunity to attend university classes to advance their degrees, as well as attend in-services and workshops.

### **Meets Requirements**

Based on the data collected by the steering committee, they concluded that the district has an effective child find system. All policies are in place should a child be voluntarily placed in a private school or an out-of district facility. No disabled and non-disabled students have been suspended or expelled. The steering committee indicated the use of data based decision-making procedures to determine whether the district is making progress toward the state's performance goals and indicators. The administrators and staff consistently collaborate on areas that need improvement. The district also has staff development and inservice opportunities offered through the cooperative to ensure that their special education staff and paraprofessionals are appropriately trained.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising Practices**

The Phrase Money was validated by the monitoring team as a promising practice.

In addition, the monitoring team identified the district's Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) team as a promising practice. The team is composed of regular education teachers, Title I teachers, tutors and special education personnel. Systematic observation and documentation occurs following the team's development and implementation of interventions in the student's areas of concern to determine whether the interventions are successful or in need of revision.

### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees with all areas indicated as meeting requirements for general supervision as concluded by the steering committee.

## **Principle 2 – Free Appropriate Public Education**

All eligible children with disabilities are entitled to a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The specific areas addressed in principle two are the provision of FAPE to children residing in group homes, foster homes, or institutions, making FAPE available when a child reaches his/her 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday and providing FAPE to eligible children with disabilities who have been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 cumulative days.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

Comprehensive Plan

Student Surveys

Parent Surveys

IEPs

Table C-Suspension and Expulsion Data

### **Promising Practice**

The steering committee determined that no suspensions or expulsions were promising practices. The special education coordinator has participated in several functional behavioral assessment trainings; hence, the steering committee concluded this to be an additional promising practice.

### **Meet Requirements**

It was concluded by the steering committee that the Avon School District does provide a free and appropriate public education to all eligible children. The steering committee determined that each student's IEP team discusses the full range of continuum placements and the justification for placement. Also, the committee concluded that the Avon district's comprehensive plan has procedures in place should the district suspend or expel a student.

### **Needs Improvement**

Extended School Year (ESY) services documentation on each student's IEP was an area the steering committee determined needs improvement.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Promising Practice**

The monitoring team agrees with the promising practices identified by the steering committee.

#### **Meet Requirements**

The monitoring team agrees validated all areas concluded by the steering committee to meet the requirements for Free Appropriate Public Education.

## **Needs Improvement**

The special education coordinator showed the monitoring team one student's file that did not have the ESY section appropriately completed; however, the parent had granted consent for ESY services. The monitors learned through staff interviews that ESY services had been provided to the student. Upon review of other IEPs written since the aforementioned, ESY services were thoroughly documented.

### **Principle 3 – Appropriate Evaluation**

A team of knowledgeable staff, which also includes parental input, conducts a comprehensive evaluation. A valid and reliable evaluation will result in effective individualized education programs for eligible students. The specific areas addressed in principle three are written notice and consent for evaluation, evaluation procedures and instruments, eligibility determination, reevaluation and continuing eligibility.

#### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

Comprehensive Plan

Student Files

Technical Assistance Guide, 2001

Parent Surveys

Administration Surveys

Teacher Surveys

Parent Rights Brochure

Employment Records

Determining Eligibility for Special Education in South Dakota

Technical Assistance Document, 2001

SIMs

IEPs

Student's Cumulative File Data (i.e., grades, attendance)

File Reviews

Table L-Complaints

Teacher and Parent Report Forms

## **Promising Practice**

The steering committee concluded that a promising practice for appropriate evaluation is that functional assessments are conducted for annual IEP meetings and three-year reevaluations as indicated in the evaluators' reports and in the IEP present levels of performance.

## **Meets Requirements**

The steering committee determined that the Avon School District provides appropriate written notice and obtains written parent consent before assessments are administered to a child for an initial or three-year reevaluation. Three-year reevaluations are conducted in accordance with all procedural requirements to ensure the student is appropriately evaluated. The steering committee

indicated that a team of trained personnel administer valid, reliable and comprehensive evaluations that result in effective IEPs for eligible students. Based on the multidisciplinary team report (MDT) and IEP data, the committee indicated that an IEP team considers all the evaluation findings to determine the student's disability category.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising Practice**

The team agreed that completing functional assessments for annual IEP meetings is a promising practice. Functional assessment for a three-year reevaluation is a requirement; therefore, the monitoring team did not identify that this is a promising practice.

### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team validated all areas identified by the steering committee as meeting requirements for appropriate evaluation.

## **Principle 4 – Procedural Safeguards**

Parents of children with disabilities have certain rights available. The school makes parents aware of these rights and makes sure they are understood. The specific areas addressed in principle four are adult student/transfer of rights, content of rights, consent, written notice, confidentiality and access to records, independent educational evaluation (IEE), complaint procedures, and due process hearings.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

Parent Rights Brochure

Parent Surveys

Prior Notice Forms in Student IEP Files

Comprehensive Plan

Student Files

IEPs

File Reviews

State Data Tables-L

### **Promising Practice**

The steering committee determined that the district having no compliant issues or due process hearing requests is a promising practice.

### **Meets Requirements**

The steering committee concluded that all parents of children in need of special education or special education with related services received a parental rights brochure. The district ensures

parents are fully informed of their rights in the native language or other mode of communication (if necessary). The committee also determined that procedures are in place to appoint a surrogate parent to protect the rights of a child when no parent can be identified. In addition, the district has policies and procedures in place for responding to complaints and due process hearings.

## **Validation Results**

### **Meets requirements**

While the steering committee concluded as a promising practice that the school district to date has not had any complaints filed with the state or gone through any due process hearings, this can reasonably be seen as the result of consistent implementation of administrative rules of South Dakota. This is a requirement, therefore, the monitoring team was unable to validate this as innovative, high-quality programming and instructional practices; however, they were able to validate this as meeting requirements for the district.

### **Meets requirements**

The monitoring team agreed with all areas the steering committee concluded as meeting the requirements for procedural safeguards.

## **Principle 5 – Individualized Education Program**

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) is a written document for a child with a disability that is developed, reviewed and revised by the IEP team, which includes the parent. The specific areas addressed in principle five are IEP team, IEP content, transition components for secondary IEPs, annual reviews, transition from early intervention program, and IEP related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:

Comprehensive Plan

File Reviews

Student Files

Student Surveys

Parent Surveys

Administration Surveys

Regular Education and Special Education Teacher Surveys

Parent Rights Brochure

Technical Assistance Guide, 2002

Prior Notices

IEPs

Transition Questionnaires/Surveys

### **Meets Requirements**

The steering committee concluded that the Prior Notice for all IEP meetings and IEP documents contain the required content. All IEP teams included required members. An IEP was developed for each eligible student with procedure codes, process codes and reporting methods in place for accountability and monitoring each student's progress. The committee determined that the district ensures transition planning is coordinated to reflect the student's interests and strengths. Transition age student files contained transition and functional assessments, observations, student/parent/teacher input and outside agency input used in the development of IEP transition planning and services.

## **Validation Results**

### **Promising Practice**

At the beginning of the school year each teacher who has a student with a disability in his/her classroom receives a copy of page 5 of the IEP, Modifications/Accommodations. Also, the teacher is given the option of having a copy of a student's IEP. Should the teacher opt for this, the IEP and confidentiality are explained to the teacher. Teachers are aware that student IEPs are located in the resource room and are accessible at any time. The monitoring team determined that these efforts to keep teachers well informed of IEPs was a promising practice not identified by the steering committee.

### **Meets Requirements**

The requirements the steering committee concluded that met IDEA '97 and state regulations for the Individualized Education Program area were validated by the monitoring team.

## **Principle 6 – Least Restrictive Environment**

After the IEP is developed or reviewed, the IEP team must decide where the IEP services are to be provided. Consideration begins in the general education classroom for school age students. The specific areas addressed in principle six are placement decisions, consent for initial placement, least restrictive environment procedures, preschool children, and LRE related issues.

### **Steering Committee Self-Assessment Summary**

Data sources used:  
Comprehensive Plan  
Student Files  
Tables E, F, G, I, J  
Teacher Surveys  
Special Education Teacher Survey  
Parent Surveys  
Administrator Surveys  
Student Surveys  
Technical Assistance Guide

### **Meets Requirements**

Based on the data, the steering committee identified that all students receives services in the least restrictive environment with the supports and services needed for their successful participation.

### **Validation Results**

#### **Meets Requirements**

The monitoring team agreed with the areas identified by the steering committee as meeting the requirements for least restrictive environment.